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ABSTRACT

This report describes an instructional material development project designed to promote a more holistic concept of second language instruction, embracing nonverbal as well as verbal communication. Initially designed for French instruction and later produced for German, the project had as a concrete goal to produce a distributable version of a package of materials called, "Dans la peau des francais" ("In the French Body") consisting of: a 30-minute videodisc, disk containing Hypercard stacks to run the videodisc, a student handbook and diskette, teaching guide and teacher diskette, and a 150-minute teacher training videotape. The approach has students at the second-year college level and above analyze and assimilate features that distinguish native French speakers from non-natives to achieve a more natural interactional style. Students study facial expression, hand and body movement, tempo, tone, and other cultural traits of communication. The report summarizes the process and products of the project, including discussion of administrative pitfalls, considerations in duplicating the materials for another language, project origins, the licensing agreement, classroom piloting and teacher responses, student use and evaluation of the materials, and other sources of input on the project. (MSE)

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Cover Sheet

Grantee Organization:

Sept. 1989 - Mar. 1990:
Tufts University
Dept. of Germanic and Slavic Languages
East Hall
Medford, MA 02155

Nov. 1990 - Aug. 1992:
University of Massachusetts at Boston
Program in Instructional Design
Lower Level
Healey Library
Boston, MA 02125-3393

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Project Director:
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FIPSE Program Officer: Sandra Newkirk

Grant Award:

Year 1	$ 55,213
Year 2	$149,646
Year 3	$101,328
Total	$306,187

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IN THE FRENCH BODY

The University of Massachusetts has developed an approach supported by interactive video materials to teach the critical aspects of verbal and nonverbal communication that distinguish native French or German speakers from non-natives, allowing more effective interaction in real-world encounters. These materials will be used supplementally from the intermediate level to courses for language teacher training. As the materials go to press, we will continue to seek ways to test the effectiveness of the method and materials and to produce similar materials for other languages.

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Products:
1. *In The French Body* package to support the teaching of communication skills in French. Includes videodisc, software, 2 1/2 hour teacher training video, teacher's guide.
2.*In The German Body* package to support the teaching of communication skills in German. Includes videodisc, software, 2 1/2 hour teacher training video, teacher's guide.
3. F-PONS test. Profile of Nonverbal Sensitivity for French. Test to evaluate proficiency in decoding the nonverbal cues of French natives.
4. G-PONS test. Profile of Nonverbal Sensitivity for German. Test to evaluate proficiency in decoding the nonverbal cues of German natives.
5. Informational Videotape: Summarizes the In The French Body project: theory, classroom practice, computer/videodisc program, interviews with students and teachers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In The French Body
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The project *In The French Body* has had as its main goal to promote a more holistic concept of language instruction, one which embraces both the verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication. With FIPSE's support, we at the University of Massachusetts at Boston have been developing and testing a final distributable set of materials for teaching language using an innovative approach which we call the Wylie Exercise. This approach, supported by interactive video materials, can give second-year French students (and higher) a better understanding of what it means to be French. Students analyze and assimilate those features which distinguish native French speakers from non-natives in order to acheive a more natural interactional style. They study important aspects of communication such as facial expression, hand and body gesture, tempo, tone, and other cultural idiosyncracies. We feel that such skills, which are overlooked in traditional curricula, are critically important in a world of increasing cross-cultural interchange.

The three-year project which officially ended on August 31, 1992 had as a concrete goal to produce a distributable version of a package of materials called "Dans la peau des français" ("In The French Body") consisting of:

- 1 30-minute videodisc
- 1 diskette containing Hypercard™ stacks to run the videodisc
- 1 student handbook and student diskette
- 1 teacher's guide and teacher diskette
- 1 150 min. teacher training videotape

Another major goal was to transfer the method and materials to another language. Because there was a high level of interest from our German faculty, the above package of materials has also produced and tested for German. It is called "In The German Body" or "In deutsche Haut geschlüpft".

The videodisc contains several one-minute segments of natural, unscripted conversation. In doing the "Wylie Exercise", a kind of "method acting" approach, we ask students to memorize and replicate the verbal and nonverbal aspects of these conversations. This exercise forces the students to sharpen their awareness of the communication.

The Hypercard™ stack that drives the videodisc is used both by teachers in the classroom and by students during class and in the language laboratory. The teacher uses the computer/videodisc program in presenting the material, and in coaching students during the three-week learning cycle for each conversation. The Hypercard™ stack also allows the teacher to access and catalogue the behaviors exhibited by the native speakers in minute detail for either research or demonstration purposes.

This cultural component can be added as a supplementary activity in the beginning intermediate levels of language instruction or taught as one intensive course at the third semester/year or higher level. While all the classroom testing up to this point has been carried out at the university level, we see no reason why it could not be used at the high school level as well or, at the other extreme, for teacher development.

This particular project started as an effort to keep alive the teaching approach used by Laurence Wylie by producing materials to support its widespread use. By making a prototype videodisc and software and then testing it with two classes, we were able to demonstrate it's potential to teach nonverbal communication skills. Subsequently, FIPSE granted the funds for a full scale development with dissemination as the goal. During the course of the project, over twenty talks were given to a total estimate of 1500-2000 teaching professionals, thus opening the discussion in the foreign language teaching profession about the unusual learning objectives proposed in this work. The approximately 75 students who took the In The French Body or In The German Body course during the project's testing period also benefited through gains in listening comprehension, understanding of the communication patterns in the target cultures, and by learning nonverbal behavior encoding and decoding skills.

We learned midway through the project that conventional tests of language proficiency would not adequately test the learning outcomes of this kind of course. In one way, we failed to carry through with the origianl test plan and have inadequate data to support our claims for the learning we feel probably did take place. However, a much more important issue was opened up, that of defining the term "foreign language proficiency". It has traditionally been defined in terms of the four skills plus culture. That is, one should be able to read, write, speak, and listen and have some working knowledge of the target

culture. We propose now to widen these parameters to include the skills of "seeing" and "moving" in the target language. In other words, people who are unaware of culturally specific nonverbal cues are at a great disadvantage in communication. At the same time, if they are unaware that some of their own behaviors might be interpreted differently by someone of a different culture they may be at risk for cultural misunderstandings.

Another lesson learned related to the kind of organizational environment and personnel that best support educational technology projects such as ours. In order for efforts such as these to succeed, administrators in the critical path of the project must respect the expertise required to do such work. Those qualified in project management and production technique must not be micro-managed. They must be allowed access to resources and must have control over their budget. At the same time, a project such as this needs an advisory board and other feedback and accountability mechanisms to keep the project director in touch with what works for the organization. The university needs legal counsel which is open to unusual license agreements where there has been prior investment in a project either by a corporate entity or by the creator of the prototype or concept.

At the end of the project, two packages of materials, one for French and one for German became available for purchase and widespread use at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Interest in this kind of teaching is growing in the language teaching professionas a result of this project. Its influence on foreign language curricula will be seen in the coming years as the materials reach many classrooms in this country.

See the back of this document for:

Appendix A - Relationship with FIPSE
Appendix B - Dossier on Licensing Agreement
Appendix C - In The French Body package
Appendix D - In The German Body package
Appendix E - Informational Videotape
Appendix F - Videotape of F-PONS and G-PONS tests

FINAL REPORT

A. Project Overview

The project *In The French Body* has had as its main goal to promote a more holistic concept of language instruction, one which embraces both the verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication. With FIPSE's support, we at the University of Massachusetts at Boston have been developing and testing a final distributable set of materials for teaching language using an innovative approach which we call the Wylie Exercise. This approach supported by interactive video materials, can give second-year French students (and higher) a better understanding of what it means to be French. Students analyze and assimilate those features which distinguish native French speakers from non-natives in order to acheive a more natural interactional style. They study important aspects of communication such as facial expression, hand and body gesture, tempo, tone, and other cultural idiosyncracies. We feel that such skills, which are overlooked in traditional curricula, are critically important in a world of increasing cross-cultural interchange.

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The Hypercard™ stack that drives the videodisc is used both by teachers in the classroom and by students during class and in the language laboratory. The teacher uses the computer/videodisc program in presenting the material, and in coaching students during the three-week learning cycle for each conversation. The Hypercard™ stack also allows the teacher to access and catalogue the behaviors exhibited by the native speakers in minute detail for either research or demonstration purposes. The four main menu choices provided by the program lead to modules that support the four learning stages of the three-week cycle. For example, in the second section where students are learning the verbal language, they may click on a dialogue line and repeat it until they have perfected the pronunciation. If they have a MacRecorder™ microphone or built-in Apple microphone with their Macintosh computer, they may also practice and get visual feedback on their intonation patterns in the SpeechLab™ section of the program. In another section of the program, students carry out research projects on the conversations using a special "nonverbal behavior lab" section of the computer program.

This cultural component can be added as a supplementary activity in the beginning intermediate levels of language instruction or taught as one intensive course at the third semester/year or higher level. While all the classroom testing up to this point has been carried out

at the university level, we see no reason why it couldn't be used at the high school level as well or, at the other extreme, for teacher development.

This particular project started as an effort to keep alive the teaching approach used by Laurence Wylie by making materials to support its widespread use.
By making a prototype videodisc and software and then testing it with two classes, we were able to demonstrate it's potential to teach nonverbal communication skills. Subsequently, FIPSE granted the funds for a full scale development with dissemination as the goal. During the course of the project, over twenty talks were given to a total estimate of 1500-2000 teaching professionals, thus opening the discussion in the foreign language teaching profession about the unusual learning objectives proposed in this work.

The approximately 75 students who took the In The French Body or In The German Body course during the project's testing period also benefited through gains in listening comprehension, understanding of the communication patterns in the target cultures, and by learning nonverbal behavior encoding and decoding skills.

At the end of the project, two packages of materials, one for French and one for German became available for purchase and widespread use at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Interest in this kind of teaching is growing in the language teaching professionas a result of this project. It's influence on foreign language curricula will be seen in the coming years as the materials reach many classrooms in this country.

B. Purpose

At the outset, I simply agreed with Laurence Wylie that foreign language teachers had been talking for years about invigorating the cultural content of courses with more authentic materials and that they had only been paying lip service to the notion of teaching nonverbal communication skills. No concrete methods or teacher training in these areas seemed to be happening. The truth was (and still is) that most of what is billed as authentic material is scripted and at a register of language that is not used in everyday transactions among native speakers. Many of the video materials for foreign language are entertainment TV or interviews. These are not representative of the kind of language people use in everyday speech.

Also, the teaching of nonverbal communication skills has mostly meant teaching emblemic hand gestures (such as "thumbing your nose at" or "my eye") rather than the less easily defined totality of nonverbal communication channels such as rhythm and pacing of a conversation, turn-taking, posture, distancing, or typical patterns of arm movement during the course of a conversation. Much work has been done in the field of psychology but none of it had found its way into the field of language teaching until this project.

During the three years of this project, I have begun to understand that addressing the first two problems noted above (the need for a refined approach and appropriate materials) could have a more widespread effect than I imagined in 1988. The larger or more diverse problems that this kind of work could address have, for the most part, been brought up by the test course students and by the professionals that have attended my talks.

1. The notion that some students of foreign language are "terminal". This means that they will never advance beyond a rudimentary use of the foreign language. This notion is possibly a result in the bottoming out among curricula experts in coming up with solutions for effective transmission of skills in foreign language. Indeed, some students are better than others at naturally adapting themselves to the communication patterns of native speakers especially when given the opportunity to study abroad. In the absence of those natural abilities or the opportunity to study abroad, we feel that there are still some strategies that can get the less talented student of a foreign language to a higher level of proficiency than has previously been expected. To be fair to students,

it may also be true that what we have considered "talented" has meant being talented at grammatical analysis of language. Those students who have a fine ear for cadence and rhythm, those who perceive the nuances of nonverbal communication could never prove their ability to learn language in a natural way in our traditional language courses. This course gives them the opportunity to do so.

2. Testing of other communicative skills. Up to now language proficiency tests have been limited by the technologies through which they are administered. We have reading and writing tests which use the technology of the pen and paper. We have for the past few decades had listening comprehension tests using the technology of audio tape. Now with videotape, we have the possibility of testing other channels of communication, specifically nonverbal communication comprehension and production. Context is extremely important in communication and these nonverbal cues provide a great deal of context. Now that we are able, we must include them in the foreign language curriculum and proficiency evaluation.

3. Teacher language skill development. There is a serious problem among foreign language teachers in this country, one that can have embarrassing consequences. For many reasons, the teachers in this country cannot go often enough to the foreign country to keep up their language skills in a "natural" way. This material can be used for in-service language training of foreign language teachers. Indeed, L. Wylie did this through a series of NEH seminars many years ago. Many of those teachers have recognized his work in this project and are happily considering adopting these materials.

ADMINISTRATIVE PITFALLS TO AVOID IN PROMOTING NEW WAYS TO LEARN

An important thing to know about this project is that it began at Tufts University in 1989 but was transferred to the University of Massachusetts at Boston in 1990. Serious administrative pits were fallen into during the first stage of this project. Some of the pitfalls that we encountered had to do with the newness of the approach. Change is always a difficult process. It would have made it easier at Tufts if we had had more grassroots, departmental support but this project was just too unusual or intellectually risky. The project had top-down interest from the provost but his will to morally support the project was insufficient, possibly even politically harmful because of ongoing negative interdepartmental relationships.

Another issue had to do with ownership of the final products of the project. A licensing agreement needed to be concluded at the beginning of the project but the unique situation of the project having had prior investment from a private company or individual caused Tufts Legal Department to balk. The University of Massachusetts had trouble with this one as well. Work needs to be done in the area of royalty and distribution procedure for educational software development in universities. If educational software development doesn't contribute to tenure and it has no financial reward, you can't expect this intense kind of work to be attractive to the young teaching professionals who might be its finest and most competent producers.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS IN REPLICATING THE IN THE FRENCH BODY MATERIALS IN OTHER LANGUAGES.

Now that this work has gained some legitimacy through evaluation, dissemination of the ideas and the delivery of the promised materials, replication should be fairly easy. Replication for less commonly taught languages should be quite attractive. The cost will range from $20,000 to $50,000 per language rather than the much larger sum of this grant. The software and video technique have been developed and perfected making replication fairly easy for us. For someone who wants to go out on their own and try to reinvent this wheel, it will probably be either more expensive or of lower quality. If another institution wanted to do a particular language they would need to know that some elements of this work are proprietary and need to licensed.

For example we had one contact at a state university in another state who wanted to do a clone of this project in Language X. This person was trying to get funding for the clone project through a government agency in the military who was giving the university a lump sum to develop three different language projects. This person's share of the lump was reduced by either the university's contracting department or the government agency to $4000. Added to this was a proviso by the government agency that if the project was not completed, the university would be responsible for financing its completion. The person's university contracting department furthermore insisted that we give all rights unconditionally to the client agency. Had the totality of this project carried through to completion, the consequences would have been disasterous for everyone. The university would without question have been on the hook for the $20,000+ to do an even minimal job. The original contact, who had no experience in video or software production would have become reliant on either student help or would have come crying back to us for help. We would lose all rights to the material and have little or no creative control, or been given the job to produce this for no remuneration out of the goodness of our hearts.

Anyone embarking on the replication of this project would be well advised to contact Carolyn Fidelman or Network Technology Corporation for reasonable ways of doing this work. We worked very hard to find a way that the people in the situation described above could do the project. They could not be flexible. They appeared to undervalue our experience and expertise. This happens quite often in our contacts with university people. It seems that again and again we find that people in humanities departments, with no project management and video production skills are not able to carry out this kind of work. They have little or no appreciation for what is involved. It is not in their culture or training. Additionally, the legal or contracts departments of these institutions must have people who are willing to be creative and not adhere mindlessly to inappropriate contract and licensing formulas.

C. Background and Origins

While this project began in a university setting, the project director was not strongly affiliated with any particular university during the incubation period of this project. This had both positive and negative influences on the evolution of the project. The following discussion will revolve around Carolyn Fidelman's experience as originator of the project concept.

Project Conception Period.
During the years 1982 through 1989, the positive, free-thinking side of the four universities with which Carolyn Fidelman had contact moved the project forward. Harvard University had sponsored Laurence Wylie's unusual work, work that Harvard's own foreign language department viewed slightly skeptically. Wylie presented that work to foreign language teachers in the Boston area. After seeing one of these talks, Fidelman got permission while a lecturer in French at Boston University to try Wylie's method in her own classroom. In a hiatus from French teaching the following year, Fidelman went to work in an administrative capacity for one of the country's pioneering centers of educational media development, the Media Laboratory at MIT. While there, she got a thorough brush with the possibilities offered by the new media and the new technologies to enhance education.

At this point, she put the Wylie method and the medium of videodisc together as a winning combination. While in 1984 the idea of this project was taking form, it could not yet begin. Disappointing at the time, there was no solid institutional base, nor did Fidelman apparently possess the credentials to launch the effort. The next few years provided experiences developing instructional multimedia for IBM a; an independent consultant. In fact, the production and project management expertise that Fidelman gained during those five years contributed enormously to Fidelman's ability to actually carry through the present project. During this period, Fidelman was also pursuing a Masters degree at Harvard. One of her last courses provided the excuse she need

to finally prototype the idea of the *In The French Body* videodisc. Laurence Wylie agreed to supply the film material for the disc and financed the transfer of the film to videotape. Fidelman financed the video mastering and pressing of a test disc and programmed it for classroom use during the Spring and Summer of 1988. The final episode of positive university outreach came serindipitously at that same time. Tufts University, interested in invigorating its language curriculum, was seeking unusual foreign language courses to offer through its "Experimental College". This gave Fidelman an opportunity to test out the prototype materials. That Fall, encouraged by forward thinking individuals at Tufts, Fidelman decided to try for the FIPSE grant.

YEAR 1: Tufts University

Fidelman had experienced all the good things that the Boston university scene has to offer and had been able to gain the expertise and craft the project elements into a winning combination. At this point, however, Fidelman began to experience the downside of entrenched interests, inertia, and university politics. Recall that Fidelman was only loosely affiliated with Tufts University as a visiting lecturer. Rather than being a faculty member with a strong understanding of the institution and a base of support, Fidelman found herself haplessly shopping for a PI at Tufts. The teutonic warlord in whose domain she eventually fell, carried only lukewarm interest in the project. The PI had no experience in or appreciation for the complexities of software development or project management and very quickly the project became bogged down by micromanagement. The PI, an expert in literature had little appreciation for Fidelman's expertise and actually suggested that she train another faculty member in video and videodisc production. Worse, the licensing agreement that Fidelman needed to finalize before even concluding the contract with FIPSE was delayed and delayed. This agreement was required by Fidelman in order to recognize the significant investment of time and money that had been made prior to Tufts' or FIPSE's involvement. After more than a year of delays (these requests for an agreement began in September 1988, before the FIPSE pre-proposal had been submitted) negociations with Tufts broke down and the project was canceled--at least in Tufts' view.

Years 2 and 3: The University of Massachusetts:

Now instead of just shopping for a PI, Fidelman was shopping for an institution in which to resurrect the project. FIPSE's fantastic cooperation and belief in the project made this continuation possible. It was also necessary for FIdelman to relentlessly search out all possible venues for the continuation of the project. This meant talking to individuals in many departments in many different universities in the Boston area. [Happily, the Boston area has a wide choice!] We approached nonprofit organizations such as the Educational Development Corporation (EDC) in Newton, Mass. They could not, however, be flexible about their 36% overhead rate. We went so far as to consider starting our own nonprofit entity to take over sponsorship of the project.

By March, both the Modern Language Department and the Program in Instructional Design at the University of Massachusetts' Boston campus began to show interest in the project. In order to assure that support for this project came as a matter of consensus rather than from on-high, Fidelman gave several presentations to the UMB language department and to the instructional design staff. There was interest all around. In particular, Richard Kropp, the incumbent head of the Program in Instructional Design, welcomed the opportunity to sponsor this project and serve as its PI. Kropp's experience in business and instructional design made the delegation of authority for project management and production to Fidelman seem more natural. FIPSE, the university and Fidelman all benefitted from Richard Kropp's confidence in Fidelman's ability to manage the budget and get the job done. At the same time, Kropp promoted Fidelman's work within the university and provided valuable counsel to Fidelman when it was needed.

Another feature of the organizational or even physical environment in which this project took place was the interesting combination of facilities that were on the floor. Working side by side were the Program in Instructional Design, Media Services, and the Center for Communication Media which contained the video production facility. Our close relationship with the video production facility

enabled us to do myriad prototyping and planning activities that kept costs down for the project. At Richard Kropp's suggestion and with the CCM's facility we were able to produce a short promotional video that proved invaluable as a vehicle for the dissemination of the ideas of this project and ultimately as a marketing tool. Our presence benefited the CCM as well. The success of our little video created business for the CCM in that other sponsored research projects at the university saw the use of creating promotional videos for their work.

The more distant relationship we had with the language department was a source of concern but never really caused any problem. They were friendly and interested in the project, but university-wide budget cuts and reorganization kept their enthusiasm for almost anything at a minimum. We tended to think of them as a field test site for the course rather than as an integral part of the project. One characteristic of a field test site is that some teachers will be interested in testing the new idea and others won't. In this case we had several German teachers interested but only lukewarm interest from the French. The one French teacher who had been interested at the time the project was transferring to UMB, had retired.

Because the University of Massachusetts at Boston is an urban university serving urban needs, the student population tends to be older. Many more students work and have families in addition to pursuing their university degree. There was very little in the way of student help for this reason. The lack of qualified student help for transcribing French or for programming the software was a problem. We were forced to go outside the university to hire consultants to transcribe the raw French videos, for example. On the other hand, we found an excellent German native who has continuously been involved in the German work and who has at various times recruited her friends to help in validation activities. At the end of the project, Carolyn Fidelman served as transcriber for the French and programmer in order to finish the project.

The Licensing Agreement.

Always lurking in the background of this project was the touchy subject of the Licensing Agreement. Could a project such as this have come about from within a university or could its birth have only come about on the borders of academia and the commercial software world as it did? We will never know. Had Carolyn Fidelman spent the years 1985-89 as a regular employee of a university while nurturing the idea of this project, she would not have gained the knowledge of video and software production or project management that were so vital to the timely and cost-efficient execution of this project. As a consultant, Fidelman also developed an entreprenurial sense that is already aiding in the dissemination of this work.

The problem for FIPSE and for the university has been that most efforts of this sort occur solely within the confines of the university so that there is never any question about ownership or copyright. In this case, prior investment by Fidelman and Wylie muddied the waters of ownership such that the university legal counsel couldn't quite deal with it.

Another classic problem for funded research at universities has been that universities have some disincentive from actually getting educational software work out to the people through commercialization. The common wisdom has it that its greatest value is as a source of grants. Once the work gets commercialized there is no longer grist for the proposal mill, so it behoves the university to not ever quite finish the research or for the goals of the research and development to fall short of a final distributable product.

This work is not terribly profitable in the commercial sense, especially for the large publisher. Certainly, the typical academic will find little reward from commercialization. The publishing industry has traditionally returned little financial reward to the academic even for books. Rather, the fact of publishing a book is supposed to assure tenure (i.e. security). This old formula does not work in the case of educational software. First, the publishing industry sees educational software

as a low volume, low profits area. Second, universities have rarely applied these efforts toward tenure.

From the beginning, Carolyn Fidelman intended to finish and commercially distribute the *In The French Body* and *In The German Body* materials. The distribution would occur through a suitable publisher or Fidelman would self-publish using her corporate entity the Network Technology Corporation. The idea was to retain control over the way it got disseminated and to make some profits to at least make up for the initial investment in the project back in 1988. In any case, it was necessary that all parties recognize Fidelman's initial investment, effort, and relationship to the project and its final products. This was a situation that neither Tufts nor U.Mass. had ever encountered. Tufts responded by refusing to stray from the traditional stance of "university owns all". U.Mass. simply delayed resolving the issue until two months after the project had ended and Fidelman was pushing for distribution. At this point, U.Mass.'s legal counsel brought up the legitimate concern of a possible conflict of interest. It was thought that a state employee might not be entitled to profit from the work products of a research grant. However, in a judgement from the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission, it was established that there would be no conflict of interest since the copyright and distribution agreement was an orally stated condition of employment between Richard Kropp and Carolyn Fidelman (see Appendix).

The University of Massachusetts was satisfied in the end that it had been able to deal with this unusual sitiuation. Because of the significant decrease in state funding, it has to consider more creative ways to finance its programs and ways in which it can deal with the business community. Although, Fidelman was kept in a state of limbo about this agreement for an unacceptably long time, things worked out to her satisfaction in the end. Most importantly, the distribution can procede unhindered by legal pitfalls and the project's product will get out to its intended audience.

D. Project Description

In the French Body has had as its aim to develop a course and set of materials for the teaching of verbal and nonverbal communicative skills in French and also in German. Based on the formative work of Laurence Wylie and other researchers, the approach is designed to "put students into a French or German body" through an approach similar to method acting. The Wylie Exercise and its associated activities are supported by a computer-controlled videodisc system which allows students to examine unscripted conversations among native speakers in extreme detail.

The themes of this project are as follows:
- Promoting a new strategy for teaching foreign language.
- Video production
- Interdisciplinary work in psychology, psycholinguistics, general linguistics
- Native speakers of the foreign language in authentic conversation.
- Interactive videodisc and software production
- Use of technology in the classroom and language lab.
- Teacher training
- Evaluation of previously untaught learning outcomes: new test instruments.
- Addressing the need for change with colleagues and through professional meetings.

E. Project Results

The following section is adapted from a paper delivered at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual meeting in April 1992.

One must consider two characteristics of this project in evaluating its results. First of all, controlled evaluation of effectiveness will present unusual problems for projects where previously untaught skills are taught. Second, where materials are not stand-alone instruction but are used as the text or source material in a class, formatively evaluating the user interface and appeal of the materials becomes somewhat complicated. Because these materials are used both by the teacher in classroom presentation and by the student in the classroom and language lab, we needed feedback from both groups and in both situations. In effect, there are four areas of concern to this project: 1. The need for new test instruments. 2. Student testing. 3. Teacher testing. 4. The testing cycle for an innovative method and material.

	Outcomes	Method	Materials
Teacher Questions	of value?	effective?	feasible? appropriate? teacher-friendly?
Student Questions	desirable?	motivating?	user-friendly? in class appealing? in lab

Evaluation Matrix for *In The French Body*

Figure 1

Figure 1 illustrates some of the complexity in evaluating this project. Many software/videodisc projects are concerned almost exclusively with the lower right-hand cell, testing of the student use of the materials. The learning outcomes may very likely be conventional ones that are being automated, "jazzed up" for motivational purposes, or made more efficient by the computer. The method might be the modification of an approach already confirmed as valuable in the classroom. However, in this project there were many unanswered questions about the methodology, a methodology that depends heavily on the video and software materials. Further, because these outcomes have never been systematically taught or studied, we had to be aware of teacher and student attitudes toward the outcomes of nonverbal encoding and decoding proficiency as we introduced them.

NEEDED: NEW TEST INSTRUMENTS

As I mentioned before, Controlled Formative Evaluation will present unusual problems for projects where previously untaught skills are taught.
The fact is that we are teaching a few conventional outcomes along with the unconventional ones, for example, in phonetics, listening comprehension or in memorization of a dialogue. However, the innovation is the attempt to teach some new skills in the area of nonverbal communication. The interactive videodisc directly permits this kind of teaching. The implications for evaluation that this brings were not strongly evident at the beginning of this project.

I began this project with a full evaluation plan, approved by FIPSE's evaluation staff and reviewed by many people during the proposal writing stage. No one including myself ever really picked up on the fact that this nice detailed plan did very little to validate the most innovative aspect of the project.

Often in education, the technology automates something that was previously taught in some other more manual way either to relieve teaching personnel, to do the work more efficiently, to save time, to provide more individual attention, to provide an alternate form of presentation that appeals to the audio/visual learning style, etc. These are all worthy reasons to develop technology-based learning materials.

But to determine whether a technology goes further to "enable" there are some questions to keep in mind before and during evaluation of the actual materials:
1. Is there some kind of new outcome?
2. Is this new outcome of value?
3. Is the proposed method of acheiving that outcome effective?

Most language teachers will agree that better communication in the target language is a desirable goal. But the specific intended outcome we recommend, improved **nonverbal decoding** and **encoding**, is not an explicit part of the ACTFL Proficiency guidelines, for instance, and has never been a part of any language curriculum known to the author. The result is that there are no established cross-cultural nonverbal decoding or encoding tests. So midway through the project, the entire issue of formatively evaluating this aspect of the method had to be reconsidered. We had to develop our own nonverbal decoding and encoding tests.

The educational research question is: Do students taking this course acheive significantly more sensitivity to the nonverbal signals of native speakers of the target language than those in the control group? From this we step back to ask the more basic research question: Do Americans actually interpret the nonverbal cues of native speakers any differently than do other native speakers of the target language? In a thorough search of the literature in social psychology and nonverbal behavioral studies I found only one study that addressed this basic question using a validated test instrument. In 1979 Rosenthal et. al. tested individuals cross-culturally for decoding ability using the PONS (Profile of Nonverbal Sensitivity).[1]
Using the model of the PONS test along with some guidance from Robert Rosenthal, it's author, I developed a version for French and a version for German.

In this thirty-minute test, the subject watches a video which will show 139 approximately one-second examples of behavior at seven-second intervals. Three seconds before each example, the item number is displayed and the subject hears a "ding" as a cue that the next example is imminent. After viewing or hearing the example, subjects determine which of the two sentences provided for each item describes that item most accurately. Then they circle the correct answer on the answer sheet.

As I mentioned, they may "hear", or "see", or "hear and see" an example. The examples are delivered in the following five ways: voice only (muffled so that only intonation is perceived); face only, voice and face, body, voice and body. This division was made so that we could determine subscores for the various channels of communication. The matrix in Figure 2 goes further to show the four affect categories used to identify the **general** tone of a communication and the various sentences that might be used on the answer sheet to identify that tone for the subject.

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[1] "Robert Rosenthal et al. "Cultural Variations in the perception of Nonverbal Communication" in "Measuring Sensitivity to Nonverbal Communication: The PONS Test" in *Nonverbal Behavior: Applications and Cultural Implications*. Edited by Aaron Wolfgang. NY: Academic Press, 1979.

	Proactive	Reactive
Positive	Compliment someone Tell a story Express satisfaction	Agree to something Express surprise Thank someone
Negative	Scold someone Tease someone Interrogate someone	Be disgusted by Whine about something Make excuses

Affect Matrix with Examples for French and German Profiles of Nonverbal Sensitivity

Figure 2

During the past two years, the French and the German PONS tests have undergone the following development cycle:

1. Initial development to create items using three native speakers to identify negative/positive affect as well as reactive/proactive qualities.
2. Use of three native speakers to apply appropriate correct answers to the items and good distractor statements.
3. Testing with groups of approximately 50 native speakers in the foreign country.
4. Item analysis of results of 3. and a consequent paring down to both make it shorter (target=30 minutes) and improve it's reliability alpha (result=.86).
5. We have begun testing with a control group of Americans who have had little or no exposure to the target language or culture to establish baseline differences. This helps us to answer the basic research question. We have had to halt this testing temporarily for lack of funds.
6. With the help of new research funds which we are pursuing, we would like to test students taking this course and students in control courses at same level. We hope the results of this testing will answer the educational research question.

There are also plans for an encoding test in which student performances on video are evaluated by a panel of native speakers. In this testing, we need a native speaker who can attend videotaping sessions both at the beginning and at the end of a semester. Another control is that the location of the videotaping and camera angle must be identical in all videotaping. Students in the experimental and control classes will be videotaped for five minutes each in spontaneous conversation with the native speaker at the beginning and the end of the semester. A particular student's pre- and post-tapes will be edited as a sequence. After that, however, the order of student appearances on the edited tape will be randomized as to whether they are from the experimental or control group. This videotape will then be shown to a group of native speakers who will judge, via score sheet, the student's improvement.

The "enabling" characteristic of this project brought forward the lack of tests or even appreciation for what is undoubtedly an important part of communicational proficiency. By the time we ourselves fully appreciated the impact of this issue, however, our evaluation budget had already been well established and the project well underway. What we had inadvertently done was to create an evaluation plan based on the kind of "automation" model I noted above. It was a straightforward plan that involved using established proficiency tests for grammar and listening comprehension, and observations of student and teacher use. The latter, which is discussed

further on, went more or less as planned. The proficiency testing was another matter. We stepped back to re-evaluate our evaluation strategy when we began to see that the conventional tests were yielding mediocre results while students' communicational performances clearly indicated progress. In the end, approximately half of the funds that would have been spent on classroom testing were spent instead on developing the PONS test. This could validate the gains that students make in nonverbal comprehension skills. While we are glad to have finally found the proper emphasis for our testing effort, it has meant some rescoping of the three-year project's evaluation agenda. I would ask anyone evaluating a project such as ours to consider the impact that the enabling characteristic can have on the evaluation plan for a technology-based project.

TEACHER TESTING

Where materials are not stand-alone instruction but are used as the text or source material in a class, formatively evaluating becomes a bit more complicated. Because these materials are used both by the teacher in classroom presentation and by the student in the classroom and language lab, we need feedback from both groups and in both situations. The three response groups for formatively evaluating the video material and the software were teachers, students and various experts.

For teachers, the feasibility of using one kind of medium in favor of another to present material is an important issue. This issue was dealt with prior to our funding by FIPSE, but we feel it is worth noting when considering the totality of this project. Figure 3 shows the comparitive advantages and disadvantages of using film, videotape and videodisc.

MEDIA CHOICES

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	
was available in the 70's	film wears out	Film
can go frame-by-frame	machine must be modified for this purpose	
	projectors phasing out in school a/v	
cheap to produce	no frame-by-frame	Videotape
cheap to replicate	slow play not on all players	
excellent installed base of players	sound shuts off at slow	
teachers trained in its use	frustrating search process	
random access to segments	more expensive	Videodisc
frame-by-frame play	some teacher training needed	
slow play at various speeds	not a good installed base of players	
sound can be on at slow		
segments can be catalogued	... if computer (another expense)	

FIGURE 3 : MEDIA CHOICES FOR TEACHING *IN THE FRENCH BODY*

From 1983 to 1986, I observed Laurence Wylie teach the course using film technology. It was that observation that was the genesis of the current project. At the time, Professor Wylie used a specially modified Bell&Howell projector to present the material to students. The film analysis technique (developed by William Condon, a pioneer in interpersonal synchrony research) required the modification to play frame-by-frame motion with sound. Needless to say, any teachers who entertained the notion of teaching with Wylie's techniques were immediately put off after seeing the

equipment set up. Additionally, one could expect to pay yearly for new copies of the film as they wore out very quickly under the intense use. In other words, the method was not **feasible** under the old presentation system.

There were also questions of user-friendliness as even the expert film user, Wylie, had much trouble getting the system to work in class. At first I tried doing a version of the filmed material on videotape in a fourth semester French course I taught in 1983. It was less satisfactory than the film since there was no way to do the film analysis technique (no accurate search mechanism and the sound shuts off at slow speed).

Fortunately, in the next few years, I learned about videodisc while working at the MIT Media Laboratory and during subsequent work in developing interactive training for IBM. By 1988, I produced the first prototype videodisc version of Wylie's filmed material. The videodisc is the perfect medium for this kind of material for the reasons detailed on the chart in Figure 3. All three of these media have been tried with this approach over the last decade.

Once I found the proper medium for this material, I could really begin to fine-tune the interface between material and teacher by watching myself and other teachers use it while teaching. I conducted a kind of self-formative evaluation in which I gradually added the features to the Hypercard™ stack running the videodisc to meet my needs as teacher. For example, one of the most important findings by my students as well as myself was that the conventional representation of the dialogue was inadequate. In presenting the nonverbal aspect of the communications, I kept needing to refer to "phrases of nonverbal behavior" which might begin somewhere in the middle of one interactant's dialogue line and end during the first words of the other interactant's line. A new Timeline version of the scripts was soon programmed in the software and also distributed to students in paper form.

During the course of the FIPSE project, I had two other teachers try out the method, one at my campus at UMass/Boston and another at the University of Rhode Island. I observed their reactions to the use of the equipment and the software throughout the semester. An example of the improvements that came with that observation was the addition of keyboard correlates to the mouse selection process. As it turns out, when you are teaching, pressing a key on the keyboard requires less of a break of eye contact with the students and refocusing of the eyes than stooping down to move the mouse to the proper coordinates and clicking.

In the final interview, these teachers expressed no problems with the software. One of the teachers was quite computer literate while the other was rather phobic. The early version of the software that they were using included no Help screens. After receiving personal training in the use of the program, they both succeeded equally well in its use. The final version of the software contains Help screens at every point in the program. My hope is that these additions along with the program tutorial section of the teacher's manual and teacher training video will waylay any teacher's need to call the "customer assistance helpline".

We are currently moving from a stage in the project where video production has had priority and where beta-testing has been sparsely embedded in the schedule. As we release the materials, the improvement of the software and teacher training material will become the focus. Network Technology Corporation, a cosponsor of this project and the distributor of the videodisc packages now has a 1-800 line (hopefully to be reimbursed through proceeds from the sale of the materials). By making it easy for teachers to call, we expect to receive input from teachers about their use of the materials and method. We also plan to initiate calls to survey the teachers' use of the materials and method.

STUDENT USE OF THE SOFTWARE

Let us turn back now to the genesis of the videodisc idea. For students taking Laurence Wylie's course "Communication With The French" in the late '70's and early '80's, the use of filmed conversations between native speakers was a novel one. They were happy to have access to real examples of communication after what many had heard in the conventional language laboratories. They were accepting of the occasional equipment breakdowns and of the time-consuming threading and search process for the films. For these students, the disadvantage of film was that they had no access to the material outside of class.

In his original course, Wylie dealt with this the best way he could by providing audiotapes for students. But audiotapes only go so far when one is dealing with nonverbal behavior. These days we could propose videotapes to students. (I have no objection to students who want to make a videotape copy of the videodisc for use on their VCR at home.) Still, when we made this videodisc/computer system available to the students in the language lab, we found that they couldn't get enough of it. One of the complaints often listed on their course evaluations was that the one hour per week allotted to them was insufficient. After several weeks of teaching the first course where the system was used, I abandoned the practice of monitoring their lab attendance. They all found attendance indispensable. With this system, students can meet and study the dialogue together (they work in pairs) or alone with the computer acting as their partner. Also, they can study more efficiently with the random access control that the computer gives them.

During my first three semesters using the Hypercard™/videodisc materials in 1988-89, I used a paper form with screen dumps of every screen of the Hypercard™ program to get students' feelings about the screen design and choices. The program was restructured according to the students' requests and new features were added. As I mentioned before, the Timeline was a result of this questioning. Interviews with beta-site students showed that they were very happy with the program, as well. I never received a single phone call from students saying the machine had crashed or that they had gotten stuck. All students were asked for their general reactions on course evaluations at midsemester and end of semester. I sense that both the novelty of the videodisc and the access to communicative aspects that it provided contributed greatly to their overall satisfaction. Perhaps as the novelty wears off, future students will become more demanding of the system, materials, and interface. For now, it seems that this design works.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF VIDEO MATERIAL

For the final French videodisc, I incorporated a mixture of the opinions of a sixth semester French class at the University of Massachusetts at Boston and those of a panel of five experts to determine which 11 of the 160 conversations that were taped in Paris last summer should be included on the disc. Here's a summary of the process:

The selection for this French videodisc was made by a panel of four experts.[2] Before submitting the choice to the experts, I reduced the choice down to about 50 by eliminating conversations with obvious technical problems or where the interactants were obviously nervous. The panel of experts, who were supplied with videotape and transcripts, then selected approximately 25 conversations that met certain criteria. The criteria were: natural sounding speech, lack of nervousness, interesting or common topics and vocabulary, natural postures and distancing, good interactional rhythms, use of typically French or German movement.

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[2]The four experts for the French videodisc were: Carolyn Fidelman, Laurence Wylie, Odile Ledru-Menot, Isabelle Bennet. The five experts for the German videodisc were: Carolyn Fidelman, Laurence Wylie, Hannelore Crossgrove, Tatjana Meschede, Lynn Dhority.

For a certain portion of the French videodisc, I conducted a survey of 15 American students in a French Conversation course[3]. After the expert panel evaluation, a videotape was made of the 25 best conversations and supplied to the French conversation class along with transcripts and two rating sheets.

The night before a viewing was to take place, students were to read the transcripts and rate them on four items: appeal of the left interactant; appeal of the right interactant; difficulty of the vocabulary and structures; overall appeal of the conversational content. Once in class, students viewed the videotaped versions of those same conversations and rated their audio/visual impact along the same four lines.

Note that students were not asked to rate a conversation on its usefulness in learning nonverbal or communicative competence. Such a rating could only occur in an "In The French Body" class which would be using the material in the way it is meant to be used. Since students in that kind of class spend a month on each conversation, it would take a group of the same students eight semesters to properly evaluate the short list of 25 conversations. There was no such course being conducted during the two semesters that video post-production was taking place. We opted instead to get some very general reactions to the conversations in order to see what would make a student like or not like a conversation at first glance. I would then factor that information in when making the final editorial decision. Along with collecting the students' numeric ratings on paper, I attended each class session where the video was shown in order to get an informal sense of the students' reactions.

What I found was that **appeal** in it's usual sense was not an appropriate measure here. The numbers on the rating sheet were only of help for positive reactions. For one conversation between two pregnant women who were discussing the upcoming births of their babies, both experts and students agreed unanimously on the naturalness, appeal, and positive interactional qualities of the conversation. But for conversations to which students reacted negatively, it sometimes meant that issues of cross-cultural misunderstanding had surfaced. Note the following two examples.

In one conversation, two high school senior girls are commenting on each other's clothing. At one point, the girl on the right says "But, I don't like the color of your pullover. It doesn't go with your shoes." The American students reacted rather negatively to this. In the classroom discussion, one of the students remarked "That wasn't very nice." Another student thought that the girl might have been acting up for the camera. The fact is that French people are often very free in critiquing others on their clothes, hair, cooking, etc., especially in matters of style. They feel they are doing a favor to help the other person get on the right track. The recipient of these comments is often quite grateful for the feedback. At the very least, they are not too offended. In American culture, especially between girls, what is important is to protect and shore up the self-image of the other person.[4] The very thing that probably led to a negative assessment of this conversation by the students is a frequent source of cross-cultural misunderstanding between French and Americans.[5] The teacher who shows this conversation will help the students to understand the cross-cultural misunderstanding that this conversation demonstrates.

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[3]Thanks to Brian Thompson who allotted the time in his fifth semester French Conversation class, Spring Semester 1992, for this student evaluation.

[4]Tannen, Deborah, *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1990.

[5]Carroll, Raymonde. *Cultural Misunderstandings: The French-American Experience*. trans. Carol Volk (Evidences invisibles, Editions du Seuil, 1987) Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

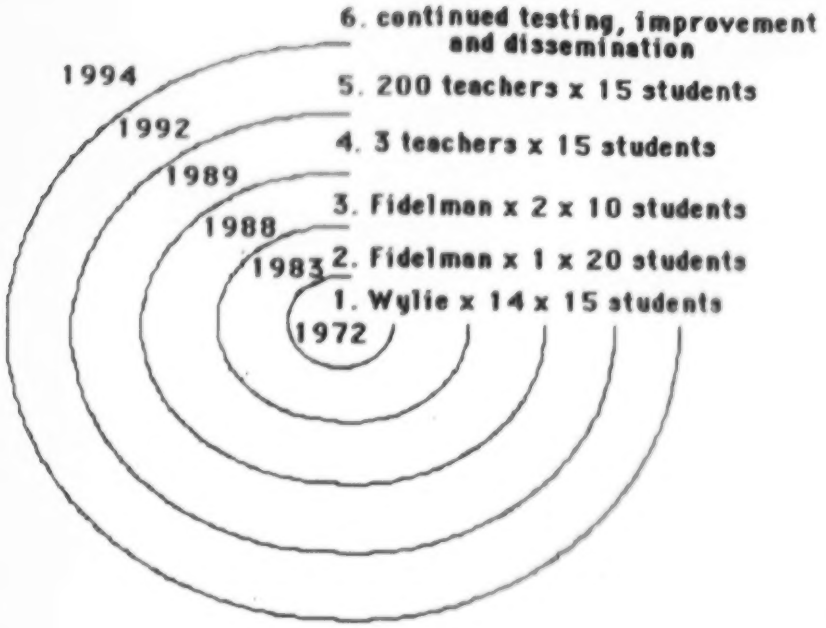
In another interesting case, the two male interactants kiss each other once on each cheek upon meeting. Nothing much was said about this in the classroom discussion as the teacher in this class had already told the students that such greetings between males were not uncommon in France, especially among relatives. But on paper, the ratings were somewhat polarized. Students seemed to give it either a 5 (excellent) or a 1 (of little value). This indicated to me that it stirred some issues for people that perhaps could be safely addressed in a French class. For this reason I included this conversation in my final choice, too.

ADVISORY BOARD AND OTHER EXPERT INPUT

The enabling characteristic of the technology combined with the innovative approach and outcomes, has made expert evaluation a special necessity in this project. (The previous example illustrates one way in which experts were pulled in.) Wylie's ten years of self-formative evaluation improved the technique for production and post-production of the visual component of the materials and added many features to their classroom use. When I came along, I began to address the issue of feasibility of the materials and system for other teachers. In all, these materials have been prototyped six times previous to the final release version of the videodisc packages. Better directing, long shot and close-up variations, time limits on conversations, color film and the use of videodisc rather than videotape or film are just some of the improvements that have occurred over the years. These came from my own judgement, that of Laurence Wylie, of a panel of six advisors from UMass/Boston, and from the many students and professionals who have seen the materials over the years.

F. Summary and Conclusions

Here, we are dealing to some extent with a classic chicken and egg situation. If it is true that the outcomes can't be taught without the technology, then the materials have to be developed in some form first for the cycle of testing and evaluation to begin.



Stages of Development
In The French Body
Figure 4

In order to get conclusive data on the effects one needs appropriate test instruments. Ultimately, one needs large experimental and control groups. Now that the test instruments are in place, we can work in that direction.
Also, I have tried in many ways to seek and to incorporate the opinions of the two target audiences of these materials: the teachers and the students.

I tend to think of this project as moving in a spiral (see Fig. 4). At each new stage it becomes more and more practical to get input from these groups. (Stages 3. and 4. reflect the period of FIPSE funding.) What might have been considered summative from Stage Three turned into needs assessment for Stage Four. Here is a summary of the stages shown in Figure 4:

1. In its first iterations, Laurence Wylie worked with small groups using old technology (film). Many lessons were learned about both the method and materials.
2. In its second generation, the method was used by a new teacher with a prototype of the materials on videotape. Videotape didn't work satisfactorily.
3. In its third generation, a videodisc prototype of the materials was produced. New classes taught with the potentially more distributable medium. Many lessons were learned about both the method and materials.
4. In its fourth generation it got funded. Two new teachers were engaged and issues of teacher training began to be addressed. Improved prototypes were used.
5. As a result of the funded project, limited distribution begins this year, wider-scale appeal will be observed, teacher training will improve, and a 1-800 number will allow input from teachers and students. The use of the PONS as a test of decoding proficiency and the video encoding test that was briefly described will enable testing of intended outcomes in future funded research.

6. In order to continue the spiral outward to the wider educational audience in a positive way, more research is needed.

We will now have to wait a year to see the outcome of this limited distribution. If there is an interest from either the teaching profession generally (i.e. commercial success) or from funding sources, we will continue to improve and disseminate this material and method.